discussed and the outcome of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) panel meeting held in Geneva recently ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : It is presumed that the question pertains to the consultations resumed by the Committee on Balance of Payments Restrictions of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) with India at Geneva on 20.21 January 1997.

During these consultations, the Committee took note of the positive developments in India's economic situation since 1995. The Committee welcomed the Indian authorities' continued commitment to economic reform and liberalisation and noted India's progressive removal of quantitative restrictions notified under Article XVIII : B of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994. The Committee agreed to resume the consultations in the week beginning 2 June 1997. The purpose of the consultations would be to consider a plan, which the Committee invited India to present to eliminate the measures notified under Article XVIII : B and to conclude the consultations consistently with all relevant balance of payments provisions. It was noted by the Committee that in drawing up its plan, India will give due consideration to the interests of WTO Members in a balanced manner.

[Translation]

Loans for Co-operative Spinning Mills

4411. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of co-operative spinning mills in the country which are proposed to be provided financial assistance through Central Financial Institutions in the form of long-term loans; and

(b) the time likely to be taken by the financial institutions for sanctioning long-term loans to co-operative spinning mills ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR) : (a) and (b) The Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) has reported that in view of the large incidence of defaults by co-operative spinning mills to financial institutions (FIs), FIs have taken a decision that application for financial assistance for new co-operative spinning mills could be considered only after dues in respect of existing co-operative spinning mills are cleared by the units or respective State Governments who have guaranteed the loans.

IDBI has further reported that except Maharashtra, no other State has approached FIs for assistance to set up co-operative spinning mills. The Government of Maharashtra had advised the IDBI that 56 co-operative spinning mills would be set up in the State of Maharashtra during Eighth plan period. Of these, 14 have so far approached IDBI and 20 have approached Industrial Finance Corporation of India Ltd. (IFCI) for assistance. No assistance has been sanctioned by FIs so far, as it was felt by them that there was no scope for such a large capacity. In view of greater emphasis on exports, FIs have been giving preference to export oriented units promoted by persons with experience in the line and envisaging installation of most modern equipment to ensure production of yarn of international standard. The working of the existing co-operative mills has been generally unsatisfactory and they have large overdues of FIs. IDBI has advised the Government of Maharashtra to clear the overdues of existing co-operative spinning mills and strengthen their organisational set up.

[English]

Export and production of Cashew

4412. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO
DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the production and export of cashew during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the cashew growers and exporters have been demanding more incentive to increase the production of cashew;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have received any request to extend the (OGL) facility to the cashew exporters;

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard; and

(f) the steps taken to increase the production and to promote the export of cashew during 1997-98 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) The production and export of cashew during each of the last three years have been as under :-